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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY

Rumania

DATE DISTR. 24 September 1952

SUBJECT

Danube-Bucharest Canal

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PLACE
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1. The Rumanian Government, through the Ministry for Constructions, is building a canal linking Bucharest to the Danube River.
2. The plan for the construction of this canal was first conceived by Professor Ion Ionescu in 1911 when he saw the feasibility of constructing a Bucharest-Oltenita canal making use of the waters from the Dambovita and Arges Rivers. His idea is the basis for the building of this canal that would make Bucharest an important Danube port.
3. Professor-Engineer Dimitrie Leonida worked on the plan after World War I and is at the present time in charge of the project. He works in an office located on the ex-Boulevard Coltei 6 under the direction of the Ministry for Constructions. Professor Leonida is assisted by various specialists who are members of the Communist Party.
4. According to the plans, the port of Bucharest will be built near the former Convent of Vacaresti. The canal (first part) will be fed by small streams north of Bucharest; it will be 21 kilometers long and will be directed toward a projected port basin. This basin will be located at the junction of the streams where a dam 20 meters in height will be constructed. This dam will be further utilized for the furnishing of electric power to all the industries of Bucharest. From the dam the principal canal will be built and will have a length of 72 kilometers and will join the Danube east of the port of Oltenita. Its width will be 22 meters and its depth 3 meters. Its width will permit the passage of two sloops of 1,600 tons each.
5. Since the elevation at Bucharest is 50 meters higher than that at Oltenita,

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- 2 -

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five locks will have to be built to compensate for the differences in altitude along the way. These locks will also permit the construction of electric power plants, the first of which will be located at Orastie (sic; possibly Varasti), the second at Budesti, the third at Fundeni, and a fourth at Oltenita. The electric power plants will supply the industries of Bucharest and environs with 80,000,000 kws per year.

6. In order to assure a continuous supply of water for the canal, the plans call for the construction of artificial lakes in the region of the Neajlov River. After the completion of the canal (it is estimated that the work will be finished by the end of 1954) an industrial port will be built north of Bucharest.
7. The construction of the canal will permit the transportation of materiel, coal, etc. at a reduced price and independent of the railroads. This, it is felt, will give a boost to industrial expansion.
8. Work on the canal began in 1950 at various points. At the beginning of 1951, a movie film was shown which demonstrated that the Arges River dam was already completed. It may be that the electric plant at Budesti is also completed, since the work on that part of the project has been intense.
9. At Oltenita, work on the canal is quite advanced. Construction work on a new port is being performed simultaneously.
10. Inhabitants of the region as well as prisoners are used for labor in the construction of the canal.

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